

Acton, Stateburg, burned

Mch 16, 1911

BURNING OF G. S. M. A..

Building Burned to Ground Causing Great Loss to Owners.

Thursday morning between 9 and 10 o'clock the General Sumter Memorial Acadmey, one of the oldest and finest buildings in Stateburg, was burned to the ground by a fire which originated somewhere in the roof of the building, the fire being discovered too late to save the building.

The fire was discovered by the boys of the school as they were going to school at a little before 9 o'clock and was first seen leaping out from the shingles of the building. They at once gave the alarm and set to work with a will to save everything that it was possible to save. Neighbors came to their assistance from the surrounding country and worked hard to save the furniture and fixtures of the building and succeeded in saving everything except the desks and blackboards. All of the wearing apparel of the young ladies who lived in the building was saved, but their text books which were in another room directly beneath the fire were all lost.

The house was bought by Col. J. J. Dargan several years ago for \$16,000 and was still in a good state of repair and valued at fully that amount. Last summer the building was bought by four of Col. Dargan's daughters and it is upon them that the loss falls so heavily. The insurance was somewhere near \$6,500 and covers about one-third of the loss.

At the time the fire started in the building there were in it twenty-four young ladies, pupils of the academy, all of whom were at breakfast and did not know anything about the fire until the male pupils of the school arrived and gave the alarm. No one was injured in the fire and the children were cool and kept good order throughout the trying experience. Immediately after the fire they were taken over to Col. Dargan's residence, "Marsdon," and were given quarters there for the time being.

Col. Dargan was very proud of the way they acted in the fire and for their efforts in saving the furniture. The many negroes who came in from the surrounding fields to help bring the things out of the house did good work and it was partly due to their efforts that so many things were saved. Nothing at all was removed from the ground on which it was thrown although it remained there for several hours.